

REMARKS

The Section 112 Rejections

Applicant has amended claim 3 as described above. Applicant believes the amendment of claim 3 satisfies and overcomes the Examiner's rejection. This amendment has been made to clarify the text of claim 3 and is unrelated to issues regarding the patentability of claim 3.

The Section 102 Rejections

Claims 1-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hou et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,566,229 ("Hou").

Applicant respectfully disagrees and traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Initially, Applicant notes that claims 1 and 18 have been amended to point out that the system state database includes "a plurality of possible steps in a call flow." These features were taken from claims 16 and 33, respectively. Applicant respectfully submits that these changes do not require an additional search by the Examiner and are made in order to place the claims in better condition for allowance.

All of the claims as now presented require, among other things, "a system state database which has a tree structure and a plurality of nodes within this structure, where each of the nodes represents a particular call flow step among a plurality of possible call flow steps ...".

Hou does not disclose or suggest such a system state database.

The reference database 50 disclosed in Hou is used to store speech records of so-called "call labels," not steps in a call flow, as in the claims of the present invention. More specifically, Hou's stored speech records appear to represent destinations of a subscriber's call, e.g. "call office" (see column 10, lines 14-15).

Because Hou does not disclose each and every feature of the present invention, Hou cannot anticipate the claims of the present invention.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests entry of this Request for Reconsideration, withdrawal of the pending rejections and allowance of claims 1-34.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John E. Curtin at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

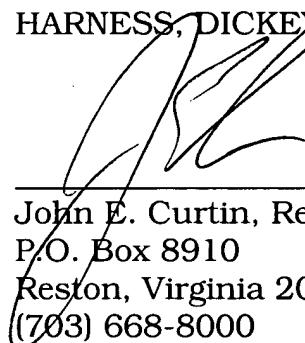
In the event this Response does not place the present application in condition for allowance, applicant requests the Examiner to contact the undersigned at (703) 668-8000 to schedule a personal interview.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, Dickey, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By


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